

Message Text

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TAGS: SHUM

SUBJ: 34TH SESSION HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION: MEETING
BETWEEN U.S. REP MEZVINSKY AND HUMAN RIGHTS DIVISION
DIRECTOR VAN BOVEN

1. HUMAN RIGHTS REP MEZVINSKY PAID VISIT TO HRD
DIRECTOR VAN BOVEN JANUARY 9 TO DISCUSS UPCOMING SESSION
OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION. MEZVINSKY OPENED THE CONVER-
SATION BY STATING THE U.S. WILL BE MORE VOCAL IN THE COM-
MISSION THAN WE WERE IN THE THIRD COMMITTEE AND WILL ALSO
INTRODUCE SOME INITIATIVES. HE CONTINUED CONVERSATION BY
EXPRESSING THE HOPE THAT THE ORDER OF AGENDA COULD BE
REARRANGED SO THAT THE ENTIRE SESSION WOULD NOT BE SPENT
ON CHILE, SOUTH AFRICA AND ISRAEL.

2. VAN BOVEN COMMENTED THAT SPECIAL COMMITTEES ON CHILE
AND SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE MEETING DURING THE MONTH OF
JANUARY, THEREFORE THESE ITEMS COULD NOT BE TAKEN UP AT
THE BEGINNING OF THE HRC SESSION. HE ALSO EXPRESSED
SOME DOUBT ABOUT DELYAING OCCUPIED TERRITORIES ITEM SINCE,
IN HIS OPINION, THERE MIGHT BE ADVANTAGES OR DISADVANTAGES
WHENEVER THE ISSUE IS DEBATED. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT
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ITEMS 4 THROUGH 12 WOULD PROBABLY BE TAKEN UP FIRST, AND
HE HOPED THAT ITEMS SUCH AS FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND
EDUCATION, WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN GIVEN MUCH ATTENTION IN
THE PAST, WOULD BE DISCUSSED AT SOME LENGTH DURING THE
34TH SESSION. IT IS VAN BOVEN'S VIEW THAT ITEMS 11 AND
12 WILL BE OF EXTREME IMPORTANCE DURING THIS SESSION.
HE IS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE PUBLIC VERSUS

CONFIDENTIAL PROCEDURES ISSUE WHICH RELATES TO RESOLUTION 1503. TO DATE, HE HAS RECEIVED ONLY TWO RESPONSES TO SYG'S NOTE ON THIS ITEM: ARGENTINA AND SENEGAL. HE SAID THAT THE SENEGALESE DOCUMENT (WHICH HE BELIEVES WAS DRAFTED BY KEBA M'BAYE) STATES, IN VERY MEASURED LANGUAGE, THAT ANY ITEM WHERE ACTION IS TO BE TAKEN UNDER RESOLUTION 1503 CANNOT BE DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC. VAN BOVEN BELIEVES THAT RESOLUTION 1235 AND 8 DO NOT PREVENT DELEGATES FROM RAISING ISSUES PUBLICLY AND HOPES WESTERN DELEGATIONS WILL SUPPORT PUBLIC DEBATE.

3. HE NOTED THAT THE QUESTION OF CAMBODIA WILL BE RAISED BY SEVERAL DELEGATIONS DURING THE 34TH SESSION AND SUGGESTED THAT THE LOGICAL PLACE FOR DISCUSSION WOULD BE UNDER ITEM 12.

4. UNDER ITEM 11 WHERE ALTERNATIVE WAYS AND MEANS WILL BE DISCUSSED, VAN BOVEN IS CONCERNED THAT THE COMMISSION NOT PERMIT THE HIGH COMMISSIONER INITIATIVE TO GET BURIED IN THE HRC, BUT WORK TO BE SENT BACK TO THE NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR CONSIDERATION.

5. MEZVINSKY INQUIRED IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO CONSULT WITH M'BAYE PRIOR TO THE HRC SESSION. WHILE VAN BOVEN WAS NOT CERTAIN WHAT M'BAYE'S SCHEDULE WOULD BE IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE SESSION, HE IS CERTAIN THAT M'BAYE WILL BE IN CONFIDENTIAL

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GENEVA TO CHAIR THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SOUTH AFRICA JANUARY 16 THROUGH 27.

6. DURING THE CONVERSATION, VAN BOVEN SUGGESTED THAT THE WEST SHOULD PLAN THEIR STRATEGY EARLY AND IF THEY WISH TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE AGENDA (REARRANGE THE ORDER) THEY SHOULD SPEAK WITH THE CHAIRMAN WHO IS SLATED TO BE M'BAYE. HE CONCLUDED THAT WHILE THE U.S. SHOULD BE VOCAL, WE SHOULD WORK VERY CLOSELY WITH ALL DELEGATIONS, KEEPING THEM INFORMED AND TRYING TO GAIN THEIR SUPPORT.

7. COMMENT: MISSION CONCURS WITH RECOMMENDATION THAT A MEETING BETWEEN M'BAYE AND MEMBERS OF WESTERN GROUP OR WITH REPS OF U.S. SHOULD TAKE PLACE PRIOR TO OPENING SESSION OF THE HRC SESSION TO DISCUSS THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA. END COMMENT. VANDEN HEUVEL

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